

## **Proposed Statement of Goals and Principles**

TDEC-Water Resources Technical Advisory Committee

Technical Working Group

August 2, 2010

---

### Preface

Tennesseans depend on freshwater for commercial and industrial uses, sanitation, agricultural production, navigation, power production, recreation, scenic features, healthy fish populations and other aquatic resources. Water supply planning in Tennessee must ensure that clean, reliable supplies of water are available to citizens in a manner that is protective of all the classified uses of waters of the State. Drought conditions, increased demand, economic growth, and competition for water use in the 21<sup>st</sup> century emphasize the critical need for a continued water use management program in Tennessee. Cooperative, regionally based planning is a key component of achieving safe and secure water supplies for all of us.

Goal of the Water Supply Pilots: to develop a water supply planning process that ensures a safe and secure water supply and preserves and protects our quality of life.

### Tennessee's Principles of Water Supply Planning

1. Clean and reliable drinking water is a natural resource vital to the State's economic well-being and the health of its citizens. Therefore, there is a consequent need to manage that resource for the benefit of all its citizens.
2. A plan that meets the goal of providing a safe and secure water supply exhibits flexibility, water use efficiency, and risk management strategies with appropriate margins of safety.
3. Water supply planning should be part of a broader process of planning for economic and community development that both provides for growth and accounts for its effects on the watershed. Land-use decisions should minimize and mitigate adverse effects of growth and development on water quantity and quality region-wide.
4. Where regional water supply plans have been created according to the guidance provided by the State of Tennessee, permitting agencies should authorize, and grant-making agencies should consider for funding, only projects that are consistent with these regional plans.
5. Water supply plans will promote the long-term sustainability of the State's freshwater resources for the protection of all beneficial uses. Sustainable water use will maintain or improve critical ecological processes at the watershed level and protect the rich biodiversity of Tennessee's waters.

6. Increasingly complex and interrelated uses of the State's water resources demand that local water supply and drought management plans should closely consider and complement the plans of each community water system within a region, especially within shared watersheds. Integration of these plans will foster meaningful collaboration between participating local, state, and federal water entities as well as bring about cooperative and mutually effective efforts of each water system within a region.
7. Water supply planning starts with a complete understanding of current system properties and performance. This requires timely monitoring and reporting of many routine aspects of resource use and system operation. Regional water-supply plans should address expectations and guidelines for operator-based monitoring and reporting that anticipates future planning needs.
8. Effective planning and management of water-supply systems requires an accurate description of the behavior of natural hydrologic systems and competing demands at regional and larger scales. The data required to support these purposes should be collected and managed using nationally consistent standards and methods.
9. The technical approach to a sound regional water supply plan should involve the following major steps, prior to considering development of new sources: (1) Defining the study region; (2) Identifying key stakeholders; (3) Describing the relationships with adjacent water systems; (4) Understanding the yield of existing water sources; (5) Identifying opportunities for more efficient use and management of water sources; (6) Developing projections of future water demand; and (7) Evaluating the effect of operational adjustments on source yields.
10. Plans for new water sources and expanding water supply systems must take into consideration that water users have to pay the full price of water production and distribution. This basic principle of sound financial management is well established in Tennessee law and practice.
11. Meeting regional water supply needs requires cooperation among water utilities and a commitment to joint planning. The state should support this process and offer mediation services as necessary to implement regional plans.